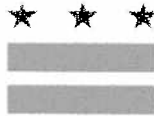


**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY SERVICES**



<b>Administration or Office:</b> Department on Disability Services (DDS)	<b>Policy Number: DDS 3.3</b>
<b>Responsible Program or Office:</b> Department on Disability Services (DDS) Training Institute	<b>Number of Pages: 13</b>
<b>Date of Approval by the Director:</b> October 1, 2009	<b>Number of Attachments: 3</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b> <b>October 1, 2009</b>	<b>Expiration Date, if any:</b>
<b>Supersedes Policy Dated:</b> Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Administration (MRDDA) Direct Support Training Policy (MRDDA 3.2, District of Columbia), October 1, 2006	
<b>Subject: Policy for Training Requirements for Direct Support Professionals</b>	

**PURPOSE**

- A. The purpose of this policy is to establish minimum training requirements for direct support professionals to support:
1. Persons receiving services through the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) of the Department on Disability Services (DDS), including via the DDA Home and Community-Based Services Waiver program;
  2. Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities receiving residential or day services through the Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) funded ICF/IDD program;

**1. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) of DDA and DHCF providers, vendors, subcontractors, consultants, volunteers and other government agencies or designated staff deemed necessary which provide services to persons served within the DDA service delivery system via the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver, local funding, or ICF/MR residential and day services.

**2. AUTHORITY**

The authority of this policy is established in the Department on Disability Services as set forth in D.C. Law 16-264, the "Department on Disability Services Establishment Act of 2006," effective March 14, 2007 (D.C. Official Code § 7-761.01 et seq.); D.C. Law 2-137, the "Mentally Retarded Citizens Constitutional Rights and Dignity Act of 1978,"

effective March 3, 1979 (D.C. Official Code § 7-1301.01 et seq.); 39 D.C. Reg. 3292 (May 8, 1992); 42 C.F.R. § 483.430 (e)(1)-(4).

### 3. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Employee Orientation:** Tier one training curricula with learning competencies that are designed to provide the employee orientation which addresses the direct support needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These training curricula must be completed prior to assignment of an employee to a direct service location with responsibility to support a person served by DDA.
- B. **Specialized Training:** Tier two training curricula with learning competencies that are designed to provide the employee orientation which addresses the direct support needs of specific individuals who the DSP will be assigned to support. These training curricula must be completed within thirty (30) days of assignment to the direct service location..
- C. **Core Training:** Tier three training curricula with learning competencies that build upon those developed in the employee orientation which addresses the direct support needs of individuals who receive services and supports from the provider that employs the DSP. These training curricula must be completed within the first 90 days of employment.
- D. **Enhanced Training:** Tier four training curricula with learning competencies that build upon those developed in the employee orientation and core curriculum which address the direct support needs of such individuals. These training curricula must be completed annually.
- E. **Out of Region Provider:** is an agency that serves persons who are receiving DDA services outside of the District of Columbia and surrounding Maryland suburbs.
- F. **Direct Supports:** means hands on, cuing/supervision and other related services and supports support to an individual with a disability aimed at enabling the person to live as independent, integrated and self determined life as possible. Such support may include (but not be limited to) the following: assisting the individual with activities of daily living, supporting the individual to develop meaningful roles in the community, transporting the individual, assisting the individual with maintaining good health, , and implementing action plans and strategies (as defined in the ISP).
- G. **Agency Providers:** means an agency that provides any of the services that promote services outlined in Definition F above.
- H. **Direct Support Professional:** means the staff primarily responsible for providing direct services to one or more individuals as outlined in Definition F above.
- I. **Full-Time Direct Support Professional :** Provider employees who are scheduled 35-40 hours per week and whose primary job responsibility is to conduct the individual programming for those receiving day, residential, and/or family support services.
- J. **Incident Management Coordinator:** A provider employee who provides oversight of the incident management process at the provider agency. He/she also reports incidents (reportable and serious reportable) to the Incident Management Enforcement Unit within DDA.
- K. **Individual Support Plan (ISP):** A plan that outlines the needs, strengths, preferences and all supports and services provided to or on behalf of a person served by the DDA.

- L. **Staff:** means the employees, contractors, or subcontractors of direct service agencies.
- M. **Training:** means a systematic and organized presentation of information that promotes on-the-job application of targeted competencies (i.e., applicable awareness, knowledge, and skills). Training, by definition, is not limited to a classroom environment. It can also consist of self-study training manuals, computer-based training programs, ‘hands-on’ application and on-the-job shadowing and monitoring, etc. To be effective, training needs to be applied to the job with the support of the agency.
- N. **Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver:** The District of Columbia DD Medicaid Waiver program operated by DDA with administrative oversight provided by DHCF that offers eligible individuals with a wide range of community-based residential, vocational, clinical and support services via a choice of Medicaid Waiver enrolled providers.

#### 4. POLICY

The supports that Direct Support Professionals provide are integral to enabling persons receiving DDA services to lead healthy, independent and self determined lives and futures. It is essential, therefore, that such professionals receive the on-going training required to carry out these responsibilities effectively.

It is the policy of DDA that all providers make available on-going competency and value-based training to direct support professionals in a manner consistent with the requirements set forth in this policy.

All Direct Support Professionals must receive training that will equip them with key knowledge, skills, and abilities. Similar to the value outcomes noted within DDA’s Individual Support Plan (ISP) and HCBS Waiver Provider Certification Review; Direct Support Professionals must receive training in the following value outcomes: Rights and Dignity; Choice and Decision-Making; Health and Wellness; Safety and Security; Community Inclusion; Relationships; Satisfaction; and Service Delivery.

#### 5. RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility of this policy is vested in the Director of the Department on Disability Services and the implementation of the policy is responsibility of the Deputy Director of the Developmental Disabilities Administration.

#### 6. STANDARDS

DDS has adopted a set of standards in order to ensure compliance with all programmatic, statutory and court-mandated matters pertaining to the knowledge and skills of the direct support staff who deliver services to individuals receiving DDA services, and promote

best practice in the delivery of services and supports to achieve valued outcomes for people served by DDA. These standards are as follows:

**TRAINING DELIVERY and CONTENT**

- A. Persons served shall receive services from competent and qualified staff.
- B. Staff providing direct services shall demonstrate competency in basic writing and communication skills by completing a written and verbal assessment to verify their required abilities to communicate in English.
- C. Staff shall receive competency based training that provides them with a working understanding of the field of developmental disabilities, its history, current values and best practices as well as the important role that direct support professionals play.
- D. Staff shall complete competency-based training requirements in accordance with the guidelines and information described in the individual support plan (ISP) of each person served.
- E. Staff shall complete DDS incident management training in accordance with the District requirements for incident reporting.
- F. Staff providing direct services shall complete training in universal precautions and infection control on an annual basis. The training materials shall meet Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements.
- G. Staff who may be exposed to hazardous chemicals shall complete relevant training in accordance with OSHA requirements.
- H. Staff providing direct services shall maintain certification in first aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).
- I. Staff providing direct services shall complete training in fire and vehicle safety.
- J. Staff providing direct services shall complete training in Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and follow guidelines to maintain confidentiality.
- K. Staff shall be certified in a DDS-approved behavioral intervention procedure (e.g., Mandt, CPI, or Positive Behavior Strategies) before using restraint techniques. Staff members providing direct support shall maintain annual certification in a DDS-approved behavioral intervention procedure if the person he/she supports has a behavior support plan that includes the use of crisis intervention and/or prevention techniques.

- L. Staff administering medication shall complete and maintain certification in a DDS-approved medication administration course in addition to supervision by a registered nurse licensed in the jurisdiction where the service is being delivered.
- M. Staff who work in homes certified as Intermediate Care Facilities for persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (ICFs/IDD) must also maintain all training requirements consistent with local District and federal law.
- N. Any person delivering services under the HCBS waiver program must adhere to the training requirements consistent with local District law.
- O. In addition to the applicable requirements described in policy statements A-M (above), staff shall complete the four DDS training standards as follows:
  - 1. Staff shall complete the noted **Employee Orientation Training** before working with or in the residence of an individual supported by the DDA service system. The staff member is employed with the Agency Provider but not deployed to the home; they are in the training phase.
  - 2. Staff shall complete the noted **Specialized Training** based upon the needs noted in the Individual Service Plan (ISP) of each person receiving services. This in-service training is conducted while the employee shadows an experienced direct support professional who is currently providing the services noted in the ISP. Each staff member must have a completed Supervisor Orientation Checklist prior to working alone at a direct service location providing direct support services.
  - 3. Staff shall complete the **Core Training** within ninety 90 days of assignment. This training provides a base level of knowledge for the direct support professional.
  - 4. Staff shall complete the **Enhanced Training** annually or based upon the renewal requirements (e.g. CPR must be renewed annually; First Aid must be renewed every three (3) years). This training provides the experienced professional with the opportunity to refresh their knowledge and learn current best practices utilized within the profession.

#### **TRAINING RECORD and APPROVAL**

- P. Each staff member must have a completed Supervisor Orientation Checklist and Supervisor In-Service Orientation Checklist after completing the Orientation Phase 1 and 2 Training prior to working alone at a direct service location providing direct support services and obtaining the Core Training.
- Q. Staff providing services on a temporary or interim basis shall comply with the training requirements of the staff for which they are replacing; it is also applicable to volunteers, and contractors.

- R. Any staff, working for an Agency Provider outside of the geographical area of the District of Columbia that provides direct support to a person served by the District must receive all of the required training outlined in this policy.
- S. To complete a standard training course, trainees shall achieve 80% competency rating during the written competency verification process.
- T. Agency Providers' curriculum or training modules shall be approved by the DDS Training Institute or its designee in order for staff to receive credit for meeting the training requirement. While in the approval process, Agency Providers must use DDS Competency tests with Agency Provider curriculum.
- U. Agency Providers or designees shall agree to and adhere to the training approval guidelines provided by the DDS Training Institute.
- V. Agency Providers shall submit to the DDS Training Institute the names, hire dates, and position titles of all professional, technical, direct support, or related staff that provide services to individuals who receive supports through DDS. **This information must be submitted using approved forms and processes within ten (10) business days of the date of hire.**
- W. Agency Providers shall submit information to the DDS Training Institute regarding personnel changes (e.g., when a staff member leaves the agency, changes his/her name or receives a promotion) within ten (10) business days, using approved forms/processes.

## 7. PROCEDURES

### A. Approved Trainer

- a. The Agency Provider shall designate one or more staff positions to be responsible for coordinating staff training. The employee responsible for staff training should have broad knowledge of support and service needs of persons with developmental disabilities, and possess the necessary skills to organize and implement a training program.
- b. The Agency Provider shall ensure that the approved trainer is competent to provide each employee with initial and continuing training that enables the employee to perform his or her duties effectively, efficiently, and competently.
  - 1. The approved trainer must have a minimum of three years experience providing direct supports, or specific expertise/certification in the subject matter. (e.g., Registered Nurse, Certified CPR instructor, Licensed Psychologist) in order to verify competency to train staff.

- c. The Agency Provider shall ensure that the approved trainer adheres to all required DDS policies and guidelines or administrative updates as well as maintains accurate and up-to-date training records.
- d. The organization shall establish a written training plan to include a training calendar. This plan must show how the training will be provided and the areas covered. The training calendar should identify, at minimum, the training date, time, location and approved trainer.

## **B. Training Records**

- a. Training records shall be maintained in the Agency Provider administrative offices and shall contain the following:
  - 2. A training plan addressing how the content of each course or topic will be delivered;
  - 3. A training calendar describing the courses or individual topics offered and when.
  - 4. Training curriculum and handouts used to teach staff.
  - 5. Documentation of attendance through a report that includes the title and date of the course, the name of the approved trainer, name and signature of attendees and numerical competency verification passing with 80% or better.
  - 6. In addition to the documentation noted above, an Agency Provider may maintain electronic training records.
- b. Agencies shall maintain documented proof that former and current staff members have completed required trainings. Former training records should be maintained up to six years after staff members have separated from the agency. Documented proof shall consist of the following:
  - 1. Competency verification forms or graded tests;
  - 2. Agency sign-in sheets with grades provided (graded tests filed at the agency will provide additional documented proof); and may include
  - 3. An Agency Provider's electronic training records system.
- c. Within ten (10) working days of a request, the Human Resource office of the Agency Provider shall provide former and current staff with copies or an Agency Provider Human Resource Office with copies of the Supervisor Orientation Checklist and/or the first page of their completed written competency verification forms.
- d. Agencies shall develop a written procedure, specifying the standardized process for agency tracking of individual-specific training requirements.
- e. Agencies shall be subject to training audits conducted by DDS or designees. Training audits may include (but not be limited to) the following:
  - 1. Training record reviews

2. Interviews with agency personnel
3. In-class monitoring

### **C. Staff Training**

- a. Training programs, identified as necessary by the Agency Provider during the application process shall include a written and verbal assessment to determine competency in basic writing and communication skills, which are pertinent to the duties of direct support to include:
  1. Ability to read and write in English
  2. Ability to verbally communicate in English
- b. All Direct Support Professionals must receive key knowledge, skills, and abilities through these core values; Health and Wellness; Choice and Decision-Making; Rights and Dignity; Safety and Security; Community Inclusion; Relationships; and Satisfaction. Through these core values Direct Support Professionals must receive competency based training in the following four phases:
  1. Employee Orientation Training
  2. Specialized In-Service Training
  3. Core Training
  4. Enhanced Training
- c. Employee Orientation Training:

Direct support staff shall be trained and pass the competency verification process for the Employee Orientation training to include the following:

1. Introduction to Developmental Disabilities
2. Human Growth and Development
3. The Direct Support Agency's philosophy, policies and procedures, goals, personnel policies, services, practices,;
4. Fire and vehicle safety, building emergency, disaster plans and evacuation procedures;
5. Required policies of the Department on Disability Services, including but not limited to those required under the *Evans v. Williams* 2001 Plan for Compliance.
6. The following DDS training standards:

#### **Health and Wellness**

- a. Health Passport and Medical Appointments
- b. Understanding Medication Basics
- c. Signs & Symptoms
- d. Adaptive Equipment
- e. Oral Health & Hygiene



### **Choice and Decision Making**

- a. Choice and Dignity of Risk
- b. Introduction to Informed Consent
- c. Alternatives to Guardianship

### **Rights and Dignity**

- a. Person First Language
- b. Introduction to Individual Rights

### **Safety and Security**

- a. Universal Precautions & Infection Control
- b. Basic HIPAA Overview and Confidentiality
- c. Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation
- d. Incident Management Reporting

### **Community Inclusion and Relationships**

- a. Introduction to Socialization

### **Satisfaction**

- a. Person-Centered Thinking
- b. Value Based Decision Making

#### d. Specialized In-Service Training:

1. Direct support staff shall be accompanied; not working in the home alone; by experienced workers until such time as these staff person(s) are able to safeguard the health and safety of individuals being served by agencies. DSPs must complete the Supervisor In-Service Orientation Checklist prior to working alone in the home.
2. Direct support staff shall review the Individual Support Plan for each person the direct support staff will be providing supports.
3. Direct support staff shall receive training regarding all direct support documentation requirements, processes, protocols and procedures.
4. During this time period, direct support staff shall receive specialized in-service training and pass the competency verification process prior to providing service without an experienced DSP being present or, subsequently, suggested by the Interdisciplinary Team, to include but not be limited to:
  - a. **Health care management plan;**
  - b. **CPR and First-Aid**
  - c. **DSP and individual support plan implementation;**

- d. DSP and **behavior support plan implementation**; persons who work with individuals who require **behavior management**, as specified in his/her individual support plan, must receive training in behavior modification (i.e. principles of behavior change) and training in a behavior management technique recognized by the DDS Training Institute (e.g. Crisis Prevention Intervention, Positive Behavior Strategies, or Mandt)
  - e. All staff shall be trained in principles of **behavior change** and be able to demonstrate the skills and techniques necessary to:
    - 1. Intervene when an individual exhibits an inappropriate behavior; and
    - 2. Implement the program plans for each individual for whom they are responsible.
  - f. Persons who work with individuals who have **special nutrition or dietary needs** shall receive training to understand the importance of the needs and how to monitor and/or implement dining techniques and strategies.
  - g. Persons who work with individuals who require **specialized techniques** during mealtime protocols shall receive training in the use of those techniques.
  - h. Persons who work with individuals who use **mobility devices** shall receive training in **mobility procedures**, the safe use of mobility devices and **safe transfer procedures**.
  - i. Persons who support individuals who use other adaptive equipment and devices, such as communication devices, switches, braces, etc. shall receive training in the use of those devices and in how to support the individual to fully use those devices.
  - j. Persons who work with individuals who have **seizure disorders, physical disabilities or other identified medical needs** shall receive training in the specific methods, implications and documentation requirements specific to supporting those individuals.
  - k. Persons who work with individuals with identified **mental health needs or complex diagnosis** shall receive training in the methods, implications and documentation requirements specific to supporting those individuals.
  - l. All staff shall receive training regarding the needs of people with disabilities who are aging.
5. Each incident management coordinator or designee shall be trained in **Incident Management and Incident Reporting** as well as maintain a **Level I Certification for Investigations** through the Conducting Serious Incident Investigations course via the Labor Relations Alternative, Inc. or an equivalent training provider that must be approved through the DDS Training Institute. Training for Level I certification must be paid at the expense of the Direct Support Agency.

6. Each staff member must have a completed Supervisor Orientation Checklist upon completing the Employee Orientation Training and beginning the Specialized In-Service Training requirements.

e. Core Training

Within the first ninety days of employment direct support staff shall be trained and pass the competency verification process for the Core Training requirements to include the following:

**Health and Wellness**

- a. Medication Administration
- b. Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- c. American Red Cross Standard First Aid
- d. Positive Behavior Strategies (Behavior Principles and Strategies, CPI, or Mandt)

**Choice and Decision Making**

- a. Choice and Dignity of Risk
- b. Substitute Consent and Decision Making
- c. Informed Consent
- d. Self-Advocacy
- e. Human Sexuality

**Rights and Dignity**

- a. Individual Rights
- b. Cultural Awareness
- c. Effective Communication with Everyone

**Safety and Security**

- a. Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation
- b. Incident Management Investigation

**Community Inclusion and Relationships**

- a. Supporting Individuals and their Families
- b. Community Development: Support Relationships
- c. Supported Employment
- d. DSP in BSP Implementation

**Satisfaction**

- a. Person Centered Thinking
- b. Value-Based Decision Making

**Professional Development**

- a. District of Columbia – Overview of DDS System
  - i. Evans vs. District of Columbia

- ii. University Legal Services
    - iii. Evans Court Monitor
    - iv. Quality Trust
    - v. Georgetown – DCHRP
  - b. Communication among Direct Support Professionals
- f. Enhanced Training

Annually direct support staff shall be trained and pass the competency verification process for the Enhanced Training requirements to include the following:

1. All direct support staff shall maintain annual or bi-annual certification as appropriate in the health and wellness, rights and dignity and safety and security training requirements noted below. Additional training should be offered to employees on an annual basis as part of an on-going professional development program.

**Health and Wellness**

- a. Medication Administration
- b. Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- c. American Red Cross Standard First Aid
- d. Positive Behavior Strategies (Behavior Principles and Strategies, CPI, or Mandt)

**Choice and Decision Making**

- a. Informed Consent
- b. Participatory Communications and Choice Making
- c. Person Centered Planning

**Rights and Dignity**

- a. Advocacy Strategies
- b. Individual Rights

**Safety and Security**

- a. Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation
- b. Incident Management Investigation

**Community Inclusion and Relationships**

- a. Community Development: Support Relationships
- b. Supported Employment
- c. DSP in BSP Implementation

**Satisfaction**

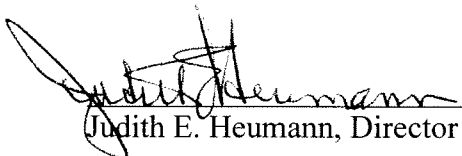
- a. Value-Based Decision Making

**Professional Development**

- a. Coping with Stress and Burnout
  - b. Communication among Direct Support Professionals
  - c. Cultural Awareness
  - d. Current DD Topics: DDS Conference
2. The Agency Provider should conduct additional training programs relevant to specific needs of the persons served at the agency.
  3. Each training phase includes the identified course objectives and competencies that must be achieved in order to provide the highest quality of services District citizens with disabilities.

**D. Training Objectives and Competencies Requirements are noted in the following attachments:**

- a. **Attachment A:** Employee Orientation Objectives and Competencies
- b. **Attachment B:** Core Training Objectives and Competencies
- c. **Attachment C:** Enhanced Training Objectives and Competencies

  
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Judith E. Heumann, Director

10-1-09  
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Date